

Reply to Office Action of September 8, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-15, 17-37 and 66 are pending in the present application. Claims 4, 5, 7, 12, 13, 19 and 21 have been withdrawn from consideration. By this Amendment, claims 1, 33, 35-37 and 66 are amended. No new matter is added. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims and the drawings. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Unless otherwise indicated in the Remarks set forth below, the amendments to the claims are made for the purpose of correcting informalities and/or to more clearly define the claimed invention, and are not made for the purpose of overcoming the cited art.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 6, 8-11, 14, 15, 18, 20, 22-26, 31, 35, 37 and 66 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Tam. The Office Action also rejects claims 28, 29, 33, 34 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Tam. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 66 recite, *inter alia*, selecting laser energy transfer parameters and a composition, thickness, and geometry of the energy transfer medium based on a predetermined removal threshold ... wherein the selected laser energy transfer parameters comprise at least laser beam shape and/or size, and irradiation geometry.

Independent claim 36 recites, *inter alia*, obtaining the tailored pulse by adjusting pulse parameters comprising at least optical beam shape and/or size, and irradiation geometry.

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Independent claim 37 recites, *inter alia*, that the optical radiation pulse is tailored by adjusting optical radiation pulse parameters comprising at least optical beam shape and/or size, and irradiation geometry.

Tam does not teach or suggest these features. Tam generally discusses the use of pulse laser irradiation with or without the simultaneous disposition of a thin liquid film on the surface for cleaning a surface. However, there is no teaching, suggestion or discussion regarding specifically selecting at least laser beam shape and/or size, and irradiation geometry based on a predetermined removal threshold determined for the system.

The Office Action asserts that although the values of size and shape of the beam in Tam are not elucidated, the beam of Tam will have a size and shape. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 33, 35-37 and 66 recite more than just a beam having a size and shape. Specifically, these claims recite selecting a beam shape and/or size based on a predetermined removal threshold. There is absolutely no discussion in Tam regarding the beam size and/or shape, and certainly no discussion regarding selecting a specific beam shape and/or size based on a predetermined removal threshold. Applicant respectfully submits that Tam gives no consideration to the beam shape and/or size, but rather adjusts other parameters to obtain the desired result.

Further, Tam fails to teach or suggest selecting irradiation geometry based on a predetermined removal threshold, as recited in claims 1, 33, 35-37 and 66, and as discussed on page 24 of the specification.

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Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that Tam fails to anticipate and render obvious the subject matter of claims 1, 33, 35-37 and 66. Dependent claims 2, 3, 6, 8-11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22-32 and 34, as well as withdrawn claims 4, 5, 7, 12, 13, 19 and 21, are also allowable as depending from independent claims 1 or 33, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **René A. Vázquez, Esq.**, at the telephone number listed below.

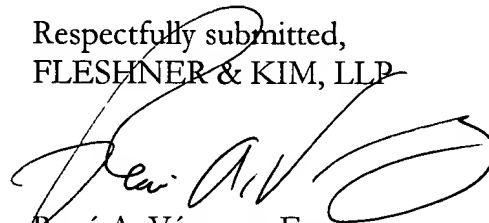
Serial No. **09/909,993**

Docket No. **ASU-0003**

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To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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